

BALL

When we last moved, I went from a baseball team which seldom won, to one which almost always did.

Countering tons of sheer American-Horseshit, neither place had any discernible effect on my character, which alternated between timidity and brass.

My new First Baseman, J, stood for no such alternation in himself!

Young Mr Perfect!

Soft, Super Polite, always the right words. I couldn't be him to my shame, and therefore couldn't receive the neighborhood association trophies he did.

Following season, SURPRISINGLY, considerably less of  
a paragon at First Base. The Swarthy One!

*WHERE'S J? Moved?* I ask him.

*Yeah, to Convalescence!*

*Total Nervous Breakdown!* he went on,  
*and family has money.*

*What's that?* ask I.

*What you think it is.*

Well...so...J returns the NEXT season.  
Hairball departs.

Mr Perfect again at First Base!

Initial game back, extra innings  
impinging twilight.

Becomes up to me to save it...ball sharply  
bounding, I stretch, leap, tumble in a cloud  
of choking, darkening dust.

SOMEHOW in my glove! Hop up, throw  
to J, not my usual rainbow arc, though, a laser!

Hey! So I'm the Hero this time and not him!

I see the stitched ball now...so, so many

years ago,,,

Bright  
above

and shadowed  
under...

traversing  
pain.